

Well-Being

Our Goal: Help families and communities improve the well-being of children in their own homes and in out-of-home care.

Three Yakima siblings whose foster homes were in rural communities were able to continue attending their original school, thanks to teamwork among Yakima School District staff, their caregivers, and Yakima Children's Administration.

Staff members at the children's school in Yakima requested that the children remain in that school if at all possible. With the advocacy of the district's Homeless Liaison, the district's transportation department arranged for a bus to pick up one child in Selah (4 miles from Yakima), collect the other two children in Tieton (16 miles from Selah), and take them to school (another 16 miles). The children are also transported home after school.

Yakima Children's Administration Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Facilitator Monica Jenkins, who shared this story, is also the office liaison to area school districts. In addition, she is out-stationed part of each day at three Yakima district elementary schools. This innovative plan has connected Monica and the rest of the Yakima staff with schools and the community in a whole new way.

Monica said: "School districts may not always be able to make transportation plans, but they do understand the importance of keeping some familiarity for children when they have to change placements. The first step is making that phone call and asking what we can do together to best meet the needs of our children. This plan took about seven days to work out, with constant communication, but it paid off for these three children."



Well-Being Overview

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It is not enough to remove children from harmful situations and find stable family settings for them. The Administration is also charged with connecting children to every possible resource to ensure that their medical, developmental, emotional, and educational needs are addressed at every stage of development.

CA staff throughout the state link children and families with resources to help infants and toddlers bond with their caregivers, preschoolers prepare for school, young children to succeed academically and teens to prepare for post-secondary education and independence. They also assess children at every level to determine medical, dental, and mental health needs and work toward meeting those needs.

While a variety of specific services and supports are provided to children of all ages, the Administration currently tracks the following well-being measures:

- Children visited every 90 or 30 days by their social worker.
- High school diploma, General Equivalency Development diploma, or educational or vocational enrollment.
- Youth in care who receive Independent Living Services.

OBJECTIVE:

Increase worker visits with children

MEASURED BY:

Children visited every 90 days and increased to every 30 days by their social worker

Over the past several years, the Administration has implemented changes in how often it requires social workers to visit children placed in out-of-home care. To better ensure safety, well-being, and permanency for children; and to work toward federal and Braam compliance, the Administration has worked diligently to phase-in new requirements for monthly visits.

Historically, social workers were required to visit children placed in out-of-home care every 90 days. In FY08, 94 percent of children were seen every quarter.

The Administration has phased-in more stringent monthly visitation requirements, focusing first on those children and families who are most vulnerable.

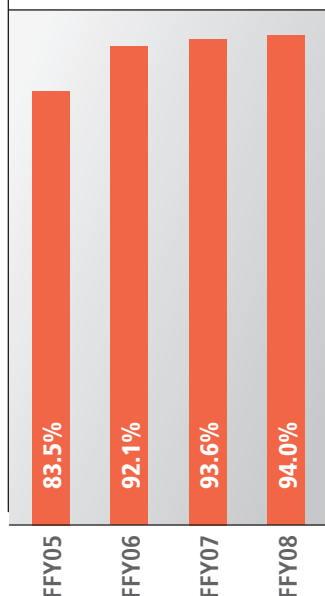
Phase 1: In FY05 the Administration began requiring monthly social worker visits with dependent children placed in their own homes. In

FY08 74.8 percent of those children were visited every month.

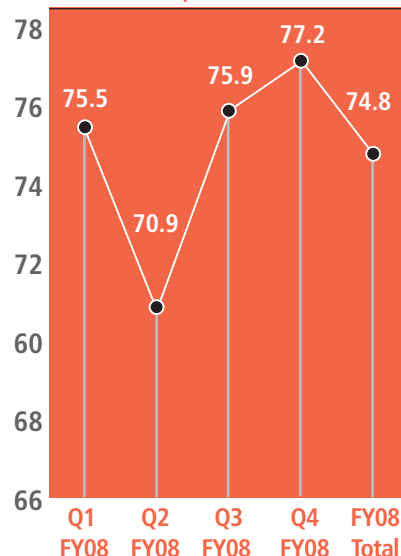
Phase 2: In FY07 social workers were required to make monthly visits with young children, less than six years of age, placed with unlicensed relatives. In FY08 73.2 percent of these children received monthly visits; however, improvement was seen during the year from 69.5 percent visited during the first quarter of the year to 76.1 percent visited each month by the last quarter of the year.

The performance measure reflected here is the percentage of children needing a visit who received a visit during a single month. In future reports CA will change this measure to correlate more closely with federal requirements based upon the federal Title IV-B measure which tracks the percent of children who have had a monthly visit each and every month they needed a visit. If a visit is missed or late for any reason, the child will be reported in the category of not meeting the monthly visitation requirement for the entire year for that child. The federal target for this measure is 90 percent by Federal Fiscal Year 2011 and the state compliance target set by the Braam Panel is 95 percent by June 2009.

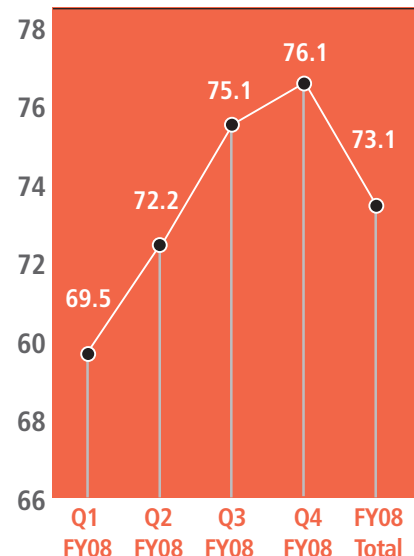
Percentage of Social Worker Visits Every 90 Days with Children in Out-of-Home Care*



Percentage of Social Worker Visits Every 30 Days with Children in In-Home Dependencies**



Percentage of Social Worker Visits Every 30 Days with Young Children Placed with Unlicensed Relatives**



*Percent of children in out-of-home placement who are seen face-to-face by their social worker in their caregiver's home at least once within the last 90 days. Source: September 2008 CAMIS download.

** July 2008 Data reported in GMAP

OBJECTIVE:

Children in placement are supported in age-appropriate educational and developmental programs

MEASURED BY:

High school diploma, General Educational Development credential (GED), or educational or vocational enrollment

Children abused at the hands of their caregivers and who experience out-of-home placement as a result tend to suffer in all life domains including academically.

The Administration and community partners have implemented a variety of programs designed to help young people have greater academic success and to pursue education beyond high school.

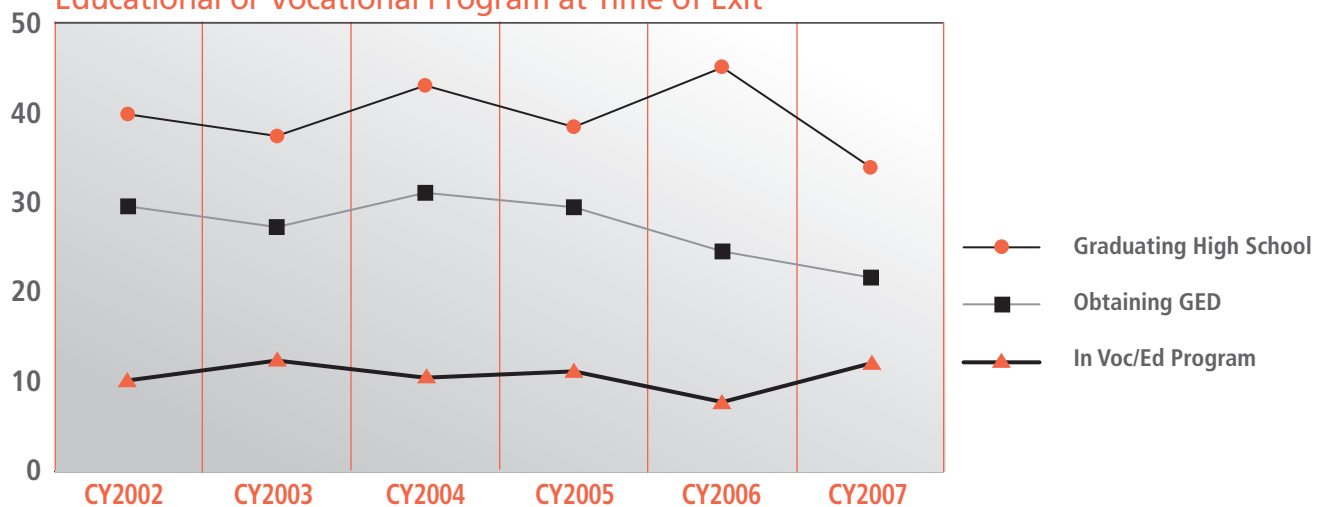
Some of the programs in place include:

- The Educational and Training Voucher Program (ETV) provides annual financial support for education beyond high school to young people who have aged out of state care or who were

adopted after age 16. Youth must meet eligibility requirements and the amount of annual monies as well as the duration they may be accessed are limited.

- Foster Care to College Program (FCTC) provides mentors, seminars, and community training as well as an annual four-day college immersion experience designed to help increase the college success rate of foster youth.
- The Foster Care to 21 Program allows 50 youth per year (from 2006 through 2008) who have graduated or obtained their GED to continue receiving placement services from DSHS until their 21st birthday. They must be pursuing post secondary education and maintaining a 2.0 grade Point Average.
- The Passport to College Promise Program is a pilot program for the benefit and encouragement of current and former foster youth to prepare for, attend, and successfully complete higher education. Program benefits include: educational planning, information, institutional support, and direct financial resources.

Percentage of Youth Turning 18 in Foster Care Who Graduated from High School, Obtained a GED, or Were Enrolled in an Educational or Vocational Program at Time of Exit*



*Percent of youth age 18 or older who have been in care for at least one year and who left care without being placed into a permanent home, or are in a guardianship and receiving services from the administration, for whom educational outcomes could be obtained through records or self reporting. Source: calendar year data from Educational Outcomes Surveys 2002 through 2007.

OBJECTIVE:

Children in placement are supported in age-appropriate educational and developmental programs

MEASURED BY:

Youth in care who receive Independent Living Services (ILS)

Young people preparing to exit the foster care system need access to a variety of services and supports to help them succeed emotionally, academically, vocationally, and financially once they leave care.

Beginning at age 15 and continuing until age 21, these young people have access to community-based independent living and transitional living programs that help them find and keep jobs, budget finances, pursue higher education, maintain a household, and develop a support network.

The number of young people benefiting from independent living and transitional living programs has increased over the past several years.

In addition, the Administration distributes funds provided by the federal Educational Training Voucher (ETV) program. This program allows young people who have aged out of care or who were adopted after age 16 to get up to \$5,000 per year toward expenses for higher education through an accredited program.

Young people are eligible to receive ETV funds up to their 23rd birthday as long as they meet certain academic performance and reporting criteria.

Number of Youth Exiting Care After Age 18 Who Received Independent Living Services (ILS), Transitional Living Services, or Educational Training Vouchers While in Care*

Region	ILS			Transitional Living			ILS & Transitional Living			Educational Training Vouchers		
	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY05	FY06	FY07
1	41	74	167	51	71	97	92	145	264	25	18	44
2	99	80	94	32	62	76	131	142	170	25	10	41
3	69	99	137	43	85	72	112	184	209	19	27	26
4	117	156	165	120	149	190	237	305	355	57	6	88
5	61	263	183	36	59	88	97	322	221	24	11	40
6	148	117	165	57	126	167	205	243	332	29	12	44
Total	535	789	911	339	552	690	874	1341	1601	179	84	283

*Number of Youth Served by Independent Services, Transitional Living Services, and Educational Training Vouchers. Source: calendar year data from Educational Outcomes Surveys 2005 through 2007.